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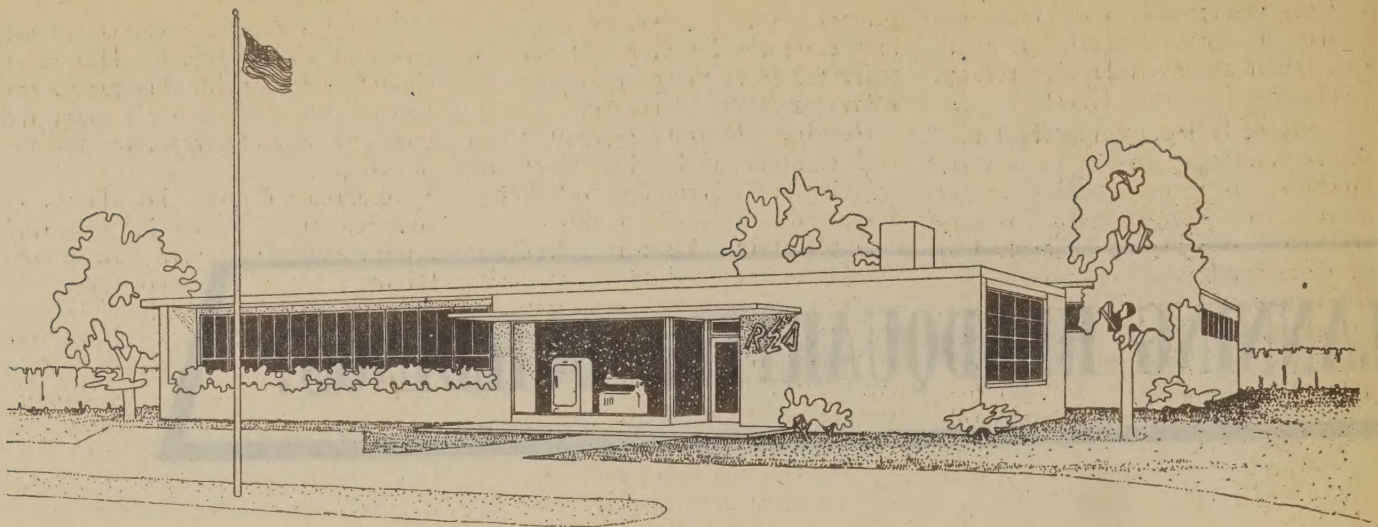


# PLANNING HEADQUARTERS BUILDINGS?

RURAL ELECTRIFICATION ADMINISTRATION • U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

NOV 5 1946





## PLANNING HEADQUARTERS BUILDINGS?

**M**ANY REA borrowers are considering or actually planning new headquarters buildings. While the materials supply has permitted only a few to move ahead on building plans, many are engaging architects and contractors so that when labor and materials are freely available no time will be lost in getting under way.

REA can advise borrowers who have applied for building construction funds on preliminary plans for headquarters buildings and make suggestions for improvement. REA also reviews final plans and specifications to assure borrowers that materials, equipment, and methods of construction are as good as can be obtained.

Too much emphasis cannot be placed on the selection of a competent architect familiar with contemporary practice in the field. REA has available architectural service contract forms as a guide to borrowers intending to build or remodel headquarters buildings.

What considerations are important for a Co-op planning a new building?

One of the most basic is the building site. Experience of many REA borrowers has shown that it is advisable to acquire a lot about an acre in size, on a corner of hard-surfaced roads, with a minimum frontage of 150 feet on each road. The site probably should be near a railroad, postoffice, bank, restaurants and supply stores. If the lot size is

less than an acre, a corner lot is almost imperative to provide natural light and ventilation to all rooms if there is now, or the possibility of, another building being erected on the lot line. Adequate parking areas away from main traffic should be provided for personnel, consumers and others coming on business.

The borrower should take into account the uses to which the building will be put in addition to its main

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**PLANNING** headquarters buildings is in order—but, right now, building lines is more important than *building* headquarters.

The Nation needs new homes and every scrap of building material and labor available should be channeled into home building. Likewise, all co-op resources should be devoted to the main task of erecting the power lines for which consumers are clamoring.

Later, when the crisis eases, a headquarters building that is simple, well-planned to meet the special needs of each system, and within the system's budget, may well be a valuable addition to the co-op and to the community which it serves.

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function of providing a new co-op headquarters.

Generally a one-story building will be found most economical. Where a two-story building is desired, care must be given to proper utilization of second-story space. The architectural character of the building should be modern. It should house all foreseeable functions adequately; follow a functional plan, and permit expansion without undue cost. Purely decorative elements should be avoided.

Architectural interest can be gained by using utilitarian features such as canopies to shade glass areas; by tying in the display area with the main entrance to the building; and by displaying prominently the name of the Cooperative and the REA insignia in free standing or projecting letters. Suitable landscaping will enhance the attractiveness and dignity of the building, usually without great expense.

The building should be as nearly fireproof as economically possible. A fireproof door separating the office from the service area will provide added safety and in some States materially lower the fire insurance rate. Acoustical tile should be used on the ceiling to lessen noise in the office and public areas. Asphalt tile or linoleum is recommended for floors. Casement type windows with tilt-in ventilators have proved satisfactory for office use.



A basement may be added to accommodate the heating plant, but in no case should an unventilated storeroom be placed below ground level.

**General Office.** Since the building is intended primarily as a headquarters, its general office layout must be carefully planned. The general office area should be located to provide maximum convenience for consumers and the public calling at the office. It should afford efficient working conditions for borrowers' personnel. This latter includes adequate floor space for each employee's desk, and chair and working area. Space for current filing and records cabinets must be included in the specifications. Provisions must also be made for keeping current needs of office supplies conveniently at hand. Built-in wall cabinets and recessed space for filing cabinets should be included. Cloak closets for employees should be provided, preferably in the general office. (If space is available, small additional cloak closets may also be added in the manager's, bookkeeper's, and directors' rooms.)

**Manager's Office.** The manager's office must be centrally located, near both the public area and the general office. A door leading directly from the manager's office into the corridor or lobby and a swinging gate separating the lobby from the general office is desirable. The manager's office should provide adequate space for his desk, current files, a conference table and chairs.

**Bookkeeper's Office.** The bookkeeper is frequently the office manager and works closely with the manager. Therefore, although his or her office need not open directly into the lobby or public corridor, it should not be far from the manager's office, and should either adjoin or have a view of the general office.

**Vault.** A vault for storage of Co-op records is mandatory. It should be large enough to accommodate current records and anticipate future needs for storage of filing cabinets, maps and account books. The minimum recommended size is 100 square feet. Access from the bookkeeper's office should be by means of a fire-resistant door.

**Cashier's Counter.** A counter should be provided to which con-

sumers can have convenient access as they enter the building. It may be separated from the general office by a low partition, if desired.

**Heating.** Consider carefully types and location of heating plant for economy and adaptability to building design and climatic demands.

**Duplicating Room.** Facilities should be provided in every headquarters building for preparing and receiving mail; for preparing large quantities of duplicating material; and for getting out mailing lists. The room should be near to but preferably partitioned from the general office. The duplicating room may also be used to store general office supplies on shelves or in built-in closets.

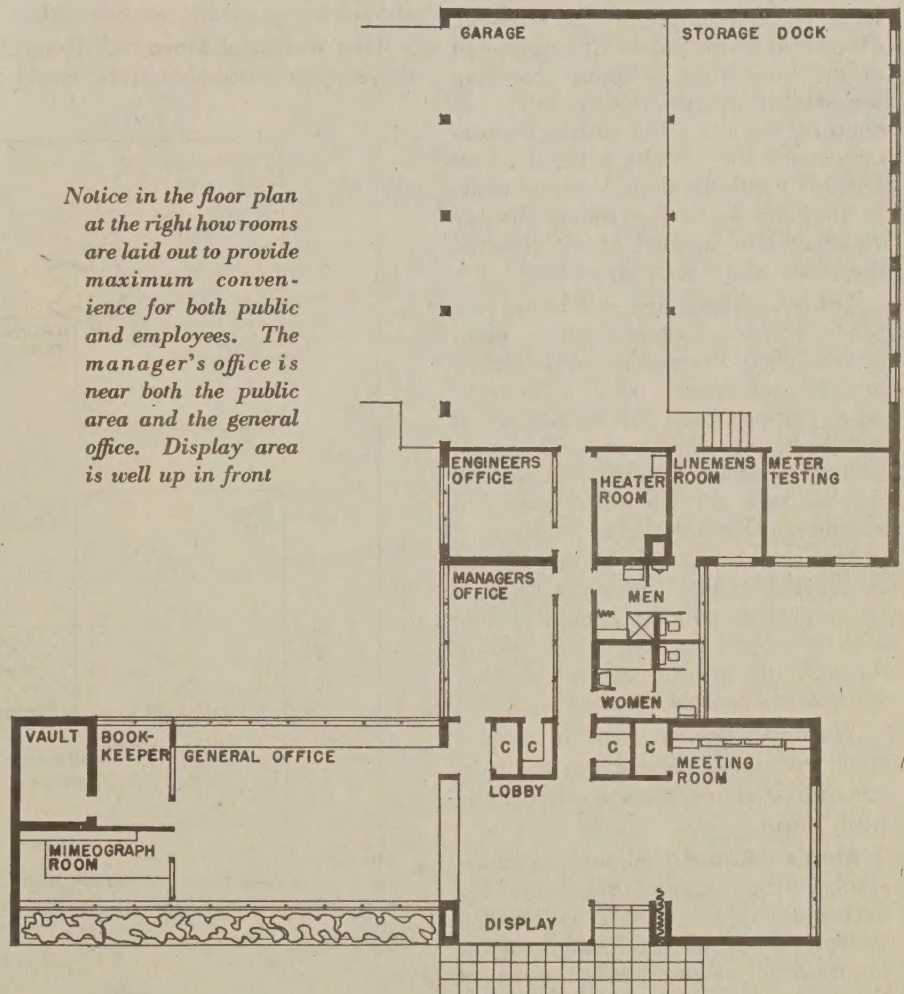
**Meter Testing Room.** Space should be provided for testing and

repairing meters, and storage of meters and other devices. This room should be reasonably dust-proof, and located near the linemen's room and men's room, and garage, and loading docks.

**Linemen's Room.** For the use of foreman and linemen in preparing reports and work orders, a room containing desks or table, typewriter, and chairs should be provided. In bad weather this room may be used for a lunch room. It should contain lockers, and be near the men's room.

**Equipment or Tool Room.** A store room for small tools and equipment should be located on the loading dock near the meter testing room or near the linemen's room. It should be fireproof, and protected by a lock.

*Notice in the floor plan at the right how rooms are laid out to provide maximum convenience for both public and employees. The manager's office is near both the public area and the general office. Display area is well up in front*



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**Janitor's Closet.** A maintenance closet for storage of cleaning equipment should be provided.

**Director's Room.** The directors' room should contain a table, chairs for the board members, plus extra chairs for use of members or prospective members during interviews with the board.

If intended for larger meetings, the directors' room should have accordion doors or a movable partition opening into the lobby, to provide additional seating capacity. Storage space for folding chairs will then be needed, and additional cloak closets or checking facilities.

**Display Area.** Adequate, carefully planned, space must be provided for display of electric appliances and equipment. A display area permits the Co-op to bring effective ways of using electricity to the members' attention. It should be large enough to permit the showing of several large pieces of equipment at the same time, without crowding the exhibit, obstructing the lobby, or encroaching upon the cashier's counter or entrance to the general office. Display windows should extend nearly to floor level, for fullest display value and be located at, or close to the point of greatest street traffic.

**Lobby.** The lobby should provide ready access to general office, manager's office, linemen's room, garage and storage space. If it is to serve as a waiting room for consumers, it should be furnished with an adequate number of chairs, a table or desk, and display rack for REA literature. It should contain a drinking fountain.

Men's and women's rooms should be located so that they may be used by employees and the general public without the necessity of going through the general offices or other work areas to reach them.

**Women's Room.** Should contain stool, cot, medicine cabinet for storage of first aid supplies, a mirror, and wash basin.

**Men's Room.** Should include stool, urinal, medicine cabinet for first aid supplies, wash basins and mirror. It should be located off the main corridor somewhat to the rear of the main office portion of the building and adjacent to the linemen's room. A shower should be located either in

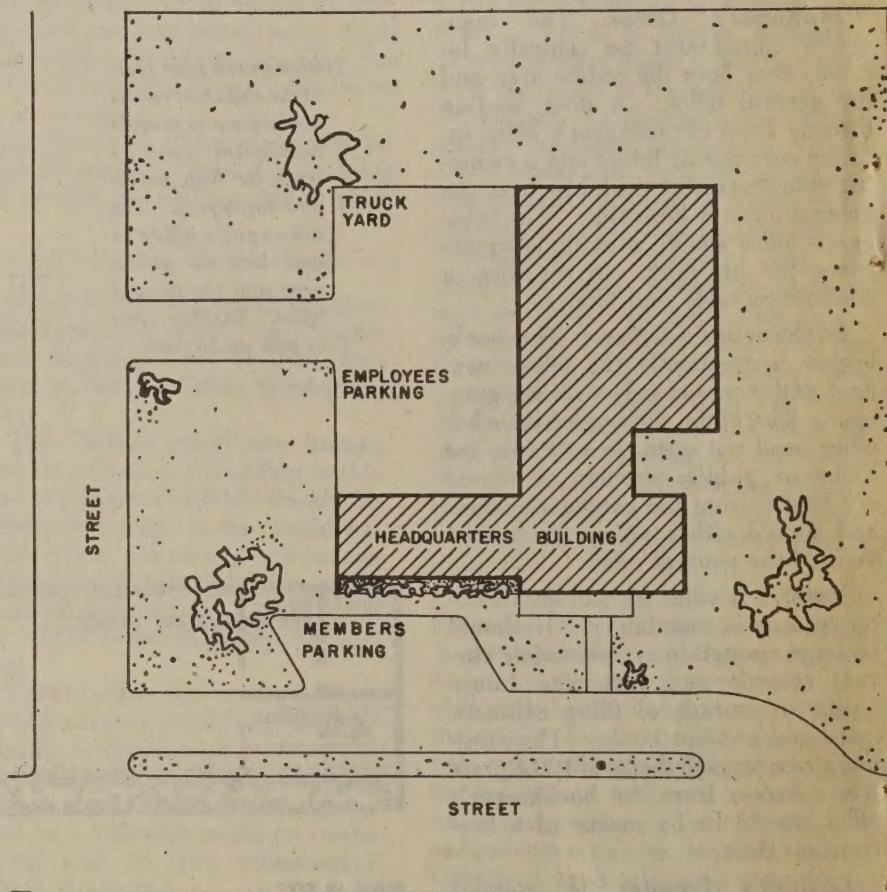
the men's room or in a separate compartment.

**Garage.** A garage for accommodation of maintenance cars and trucks is imperative. It should be adjacent to the line material storage area, but separated from it by wire partitions with sliding gates. The garage should be large enough to provide each vehicle with its own stall, and sufficient dockage so that when the trucks are backed against the loading platform it will not be necessary to move any vehicle to give right of way to another.

A concrete apron should be built at the garage entrance. Floor drains should be installed in the garage floor so that grease and dirt will not be carried by vehicle tires across the concrete apron and mar the trim appearance of the garage entrance. Garage should be protected by overhead doors. A pedestrian door should be provided at one side.

**Line Material Storage.** Roughly, the storage area should be equal to

the garage area. The rear of the storage area should be reserved for keeping heavy equipment. A traveling hoist may be installed to facilitate loading and unloading. It is found convenient to provide an outside entrance to the storage area for loading and unloading of trucks. A six-foot square sliding or overhead door has been found to be satisfactory.



*A corner lot is important for a well-planned headquarters building*